



NEWS RELEASE

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Contact: Jeff Weiss
Phone: (510) 286-5543

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

101 Express Lanes Project Breaks Ground in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties

Project will create northbound and southbound express lanes on a 32-mile stretch of Highway 101

San Mateo – Today, Caltrans, the San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA), the City/County Association of San Mateo Government (C/CAG) and the Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) hosted a groundbreaking celebration for the 101 Express Lanes Project, a \$567 million project to create express lanes in both directions on Highway 101 between Interstate 380 in San Bruno (San Mateo County) and State Route 237 in Sunnyvale (Santa Clara County).

The 32-mile project will combat growing traffic congestion along the corridor that spans most of the Peninsula and part of the South Bay. Caltrans has also accelerated the project schedule, trimming three years to allow a completion date of mid-2022. Senate Bill 1 funds totaling \$255 million helped kick start the project.

“It takes creative and collaborative partnerships to provide better mobility options for those wasting time and energy while sitting in traffic,” said Jim Beall, California State Senator and author of Senate Bill 1 – a legislative package that is investing \$54 billion over a decade to fix roads, freeways and bridges in communities across California. “This is the kind of investment project the voters supported and our cities desperately needed to improve safety, reduce congestion, increase travel reliability, and air quality for Bay Area residents.”

By building new lanes and converting existing carpool lanes, Caltrans will create 32 miles of express lanes in each direction on Highway 101. This will expedite travel for buses and carpools, while providing some congestion relief for mixed flow lanes as well.

“This highway is a vital corridor that 2 million drivers rely on each week,” said Caltrans Director Laurie Berman. “This project, partially funded by SB 1, will help reduce congestion and transit times, benefit the economy and give time back to drivers.”

The project features two portions. One portion includes construction of 16 miles of new express lanes in both directions between I-380 and Whipple Avenue in Redwood City.

The other portion converts 16 miles of carpool lanes in both directions into express lanes between Whipple Avenue and State Route 237 in Sunnyvale.

“The Express Lanes Project for San Mateo County is an innovative way to alleviate some of the congestion along the 101 corridor in a modern, proven way,” said San Mateo County Supervisor and SMCTA Board Member Don Horsley. “With our constricted geographical options, providing dedicated bus lanes and specialized HOV lanes along the existing highway area will help ease traffic challenges.”

As for carpools, the new express lanes will operate as a 3+ carpool lane, meaning vehicles (excluding motorcycles) must carry a minimum of three occupants. Express lanes differ from carpool lanes because non-carpooling motorists can use the express lanes if they pay a toll. The price of the toll will be correlated to the amount of traffic in the express lane. The operator of the express lanes can encourage or discourage non-carpoolers from using the express lane by raising or lowering the price.

“C/CAG is proud to partner with Caltrans, San Mateo County Transportation Authority, VTA and MTC to bring this project to fruition,” said C/CAG Chair Maryann Moise Derwin. “As San Mateo County’s Congestion Management Agency, we believe the new express lanes will ease congestion by encouraging the use of express busses and carpools, moving significantly more people through the corridor at a faster and more predictable speed, and ultimately will reduce GHGs.”

More express lanes are planned for the Bay Area as part of a network of 600 miles of express lanes that will “Ring the Bay” by 2035.

“The hands-on leadership and sweat equity from our champions of transportation and partner agencies made this project possible, including many in the private sector who played key roles in securing the funding,” shared VTA Board Chairperson Teresa O’Neill. “We won’t be able to solve our transportation challenges without the participation of our private partners so we look to this project as a model for how we can work together to deliver better transportation solutions.”

As more lanes are built or converted, express lanes will link together, providing seamless travel for high occupancy vehicles traveling around the Bay Area.

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